

## In Background

WASHINGTON -- Next to playing "Pick the Cabinet" following the elections, one of Washington, D. C.'s favorite political pastimes is to guess who the President's first cabinet resignations will be.

This has special significance during the semi-summer between President John F. Kennedy and Soviet Chairman Khrushchev.

For "first resignation" speculation has now centered on Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, when many now say could suddenly resign the cabinet the way Labor Secretary Martin Durkin quit early in the Eisenhower administration before he died.

Rusk isn't the first member of the Kennedy cabinet to come in for "first resignation" speculation.

Many Democrats, and some frustrated Pentagon military leaders, have been urging that the President request the resignation of Defense Secretary McNamara.

The politicians have been protesting his military economies and especially his plans, sup-



W. D. McMahon

ported by the President, for closing down many obsolete military bases and for eliminating patronage from the Pentagon. And the military opposes a tendency to run the military establishment without always asking professional military advice.

Interior Secretary Udall has come in for heavy fire for publicly soliciting oil industry political contributions and for publicly blaming the Cuban invasion debacle on the Eisenhower administration, at a time when the Kennedy administration was seeking bipartisan foreign policy support.

Attorney General Robert Kennedy, the President's brother, is under Southern attack for his strong pro-civil rights acts and views during the Freedom Riders integration crisis.

The South knows it can never force the President to fire his own brother. But there is now a strong move underway to kick Bobby Kennedy upstairs as Central Intelligence Agency director when Allen Dulles retires.

Southern Democrats had believed, because most of the South held fast for Kennedy in the elections, that they had some sort of tacit understanding with the Kennedys to take a "legalistic" and "neutral" position in civil rights disputes.

Many conservatives are beginning to snipe at Treasury Sec-

By William D. McMahon

retary Dillon, a Republican whose "honeymoon" with conservatives in Congress is ending as he supports tough tax measures and the rising costs of the New Frontier. Some of Dillon's GOP friends want him to resign in protest.

There is also a major effort to ease Adlai Stevenson from his semi-cabinet UN ambassadorship.

New Frontiersmen were reported angered by a public statement by Adlai, and also by Under Secretary of State Bowles, that they were opposed to the Cuban military invasion "from the beginning," which White House advisors complained was "disloyal to the team."

Adlai is also under fire following the disclosure that he had argued against participation by U. S. warplanes in the Cuban invasion as some White House aides and the Pentagon had urged. Many Democrats as well as Republicans argue that the invasion could have succeeded if U. S. fighter plane protection had been provided for the Cuban exile invaders.

Stevenson is also being criticized for failing to mobilize the UN against the Communist aggressions in Southeast Asia and for keeping Laos out of the UN. He was also roundly criticized when he "doubted" if Red China could be kept out of the UN this year.

Friends of ex-UN Ambassador Lodge say Lodge believes Stevenson has been "too soft" toward the Communists in the UN.

Still, most of the "first resignation" speculation continues to center on Secretary of State Dean Rusk, whose troubles are unpublicized.

Reliable reports say that Rusk, former head of the Rockefeller Foundation which has heavy investments in Latin America, was opposed to an attempt to oust Castro with force when he believed it could be done economically. He warned in advance that a military invasion would fail.

It was disclosed that Rusk, a former assistant secretary of state during the Korean war, had opposed the wavering policy on Laos, warning as early as February that Laos would be lost, SEATO weakened and U. S. "face" lost if we failed to strengthen our Asian position.

Rusk has made clear a belief that the White House may have invited communism to become more belligerent in Laos, the Congo, etc., by side-tracking Khrushchev's early efforts for a summit meeting. Rusk warned that Khrushchev would try to force Kennedy to meet him, as he has.

Then, once the U. S. became mired in its whole bevy of foreign policy setbacks, Rusk urged that Kennedy should have delayed a meeting until U. S. prestige improved and we strengthened our bargaining position.

Rusk is said, again reliably, to complain that President Kennedy consults a White House "brain trust" or makes his own foreign policy decisions without even letting him know. The decision to send Vice President Lyndon Johnson to Asia was made without first asking Rusk. There was a complaint that White House aides dealt with our allies "behind Rusk's back" during the Geneva Laos parley to soften their stand.

An aide says Rusk accepted his post expecting to remain in the background with the President largely his own secretary of state. But he has objected to basic foreign policy decisions made by presidential relatives, White House aides, inexperienced intellectuals, and was outraged when a 29-year-old ex-congressional aide was named to coordinate all Cuban policy. He protested many of the President's more political diplomatic appointments, such as Meriwether's to the Export-Import bank, that of controversial ex-Cuban envoy Ward Smith as ambassador to Switzerland and the selection of a host of "political ambassadors."

Rusk has also complained that the Peace Corps sometimes tries to run the State Department. He objected to the impromptu selection of Kennedy brother-in-law Stephen Smith as a special State Department monitor.

Friends say Rusk is being used as an "errand boy" administrator to woo Rockefeller Republican support for the President's policies. Rusk had hoped to play a more creative role in formulating foreign policy.

It may be, of course, that he won't resign, that others will leave the cabinet first. It may even be good to inject more outside thinking into the "striped pants" State Department. But this isn't the point. The point is that Washington is wondering if Rusk will be the "first resignation."